

To: Cabinet

Date: 15 November 2023

Report/Comments of: Scrutiny Committee

Title: Scrutiny Feedback to Cabinet – Crime and Disorder

<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT CONSIDERED</b>	
<b>Report Title:</b>	Crime and Disorder – Annual Update
<b>Purpose/Description of Report:</b>	The Scrutiny Committee receives an annual update report to assist in the discharge of its responsibility as the Council’s designated Crime and Disorder Committee.
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Cllr M Brown, Scrutiny Committee Chairman
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr P Cumbers, Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods

## 1. Introduction and Overview

The Scrutiny Committee met on 19 October 2023 to consider the Crime and Disorder Annual Update. A presentation was also provided to aid Members’ consideration.

As part of its remit, the Scrutiny Committee is the Council’s designated Crime and Disorder Committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Scrutiny Committee receives an annual update report to assist in the discharge of this responsibility.

The report provided an update on the following key thematic areas:

- a) Impact of team restructure and the difference this has made.
- b) Partnership working and collaboration – including an introduction to the new Inspector for Melton, Darren Richardson. (Introduction, Crime trends and any other relevant info).
- c) Funding Opportunities – Current and Future
- d) Community Cohesion / Engagement
- e) Strategy and Key Performance Indicators

## **2. Summary of Feedback/Recommendations for Cabinet Consideration**

- Members commented that they were impressed with how proactive Leicestershire Police have been in dealing with drug dealers in the community.
- Concerns were raised that young people, some who have a lot of maturing to do, are at risk of being criminalised because of a mistake they may make. Members were reassured that young people have access to support and are given every opportunity to reflect on their choices in order to make the correct decisions before they are charged. The Committee was reassured that taking enforcement action is a last resort.
- The Committee thanked Leicestershire Police for their service.
- A concern was raised regarding the use of social media in order to organise group antisocial behaviour or criminal activity, however it was confirmed that this is rare in Melton.
- Further concerns were raised regarding the disruption that Just Stop Oil protesters can cause, however the Committee were informed that the Police have a plan for such occurrences within Leicestershire.
- The comment was made that submitting queries via the Police website is cumbersome, however it was explained that the form has to conform to reporting standards.
- Concern was raised at the potential for prisoners to be released early due to prison overcrowding. Inspector Richardson informed the Committee that 'Operation Safeguard' would be enacted in such an occurrence, and that this involved the temporary use of custody suites for remand prisoners in some circumstances.
- Members commented that Crimestoppers is a really good service.
- The importance of community trust in the Police was raised, however it was recognised that increased reporting is going to help.
- The comment was made that rural crime prevention has improved with the beat officers and increased visibility and proactivity, as well as the community communication channels.
- Concerns were raised regarding retail crime and although Inspector Richardson stated that there had not be a noticeable increase in retail crime, he did state that County Lines and drugs do impact upon retail crime. The importance of reporting was reiterated.
- Members questioned the speediness of returning recovered stolen property with their rightful owners. Inspector Richardson stated that the Police aim to return property in a timely manner but that there are sometimes reasons why it isn't, e.g. the property being needed for further investigation.

- The Committee wanted more data on how many times the Council has engaged with and supported residents, and not just how many times enforcement action has been taken.
- When it comes to speeding, Members stated that flashing speed signs seem to be highly effective. Clarity was sought on how to request speed monitoring arrangements in local areas.
- Further to a discussion on fly tipping, members wanted to ensure that effective communication takes place, especially around the hiring waste contractors and the fact that the owner of the waste is responsible for how their waste is disposed of even if they hire a contractor to dispose of the waste. Officers outlined the various communication channels and committed to check the accessibility of information on the council website. Members raised a concern that the planned closure of reduced opening hours of household recycling suites would risk increased fly tipping.

**Written by: Scrutiny Committee Chairman in consultation with Members of the Scrutiny Committee.**